

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Commonwealth Accountability Testing System Data Release

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 158.6453

History/Background:

Existing Policy. Reporting for the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) in 2007 is based on revised regulation, 703 KAR 5:020, which the Kentucky Board of Education approved in February 2007. Several changes in the regulation have impacted the accountability formula. For example, additional grades are included in reporting for Reading and Mathematics, and the weights of content areas, non-academic measures and the norm-referenced component were changed. Instead of reporting a norm-referenced index at high school, an ACT index will be reported using the results from the PLAN assessment administered in September 2006. Elementary and middle schools will test and report norm-referenced results, but these results will not be included in the accountability index at elementary and middle school levels.

In addition to the accountability changes, several changes to the assessment program were implemented fully during 2006 and 2007 and impact the reporting of results in fall 2007. The assessment was based on a revised Core Content for Assessment 4.1 and used a new design for the Kentucky Core Content Tests. Assessments in on-demand writing and practical living/vocational studies were moved to new grades, assessments in reading and mathematics were added to accomplish annual testing of those content areas in grades 3-8, and the student performance standards that define the student performance categories of Novice, Apprentice, Proficient and Distinguished were validated or set in areas with new tests. The standard setting process yielded new cut points that identify when a student moves from one performance level category to another.

Because of the multiple changes to the assessment and accountability program, the National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA) felt a statistical process to link old CATS (2000-2006) and new CATS (2007-beyond) was necessary and appropriate. This is a similar situation to the statistical linkage made with the regression model during the changes made from KIRIS to CATS in 1999-2000.

Given that Kentucky desired to keep accountability index targets in place and that state-level trends in accountability indices are stable over time, the National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA) proposed the use of a

concordance approach that would link the old and new CATS and allows Kentucky to compare two different tests from two different years. This approach was discussed with the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) in April 2007. With concordance, the accountability index in 2007 can be linked to the original school goals displayed on the Growth Chart page of the Kentucky Performance Report, and this keeps accountability moving forward. Concordance tables are built by using both scores and the rank order of the score. The concordance link is made at the accountability index level only. School baselines are not recalculated and growth lines are not redrawn.

Policy Issues:

A CATS Concordance Table connects old and new CATS by linking a 2007 nonadjusted accountability index and related percentile rank to an estimated accountability index and percentile rank. The estimated values are based on the state growth trends for elementary, middle and high schools from 2000-2006. Once the percentile ranks are aligned, the estimated accountability index becomes the Adjusted Accountability Index to indicate that the index scores based on the 2007 results are concordant with the 2000-2006 index scores. Attachment A and B include PowerPoint presentations with background information regarding concordance. Attachment A was developed to focus on the concept of concordance for condensed presentations to local board of education and community members. Attachment B explains the CATS concordance in more detail.

The Adjusted Accountability Index is reported in the Kentucky Performance Report (KPR) on a school's Growth Chart page. The Adjusted Accountability Index becomes a school's final score in the system and reflects a school's position in the accountability system. For informational purposes, the Nonadjusted Accountability Index will be reported to schools on the Accountability Trend page of the KPR.

The Kentucky Department of Education is committed to schools and districts receiving accurate data to inform the work toward proficiency. Kentucky schools will receive data for their review and quality control on or before September 20, 2007. After a thorough quality control process by Kentucky's schools, final Kentucky Performance Reports will be released publicly.

The school and district CATS results will be discussed as part of the October meeting on the morning of October 3.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

The Kentucky Board of Education remains diligent in its focus on Kentucky schools and all students reaching proficiency. The Board must know the performance of Kentucky schools as it initiates programs and supports to assist schools in reaching this proficiency standard and to ensure that every child in Kentucky is proficient and prepared for success.

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Interim Commissioner of Education

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